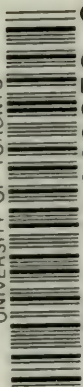


UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGEDY

OF

# HAMLET

AS ARRANGED FOR THE STAGE

BY

**H. B. IRVING**

*And produced by him at the*

SHAFTESBURY THEATRE

ON

MONDAY, 8TH' FEBRUARY, 1909

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## NOTE

THE most material alteration in the present stage version of "Hamlet" is the adoption in the Second Act of the sequence of scenes as given in the earlier Quarto of 1603. According to this arrangement, the soliloquy "To be, or not to be," and the scene between Hamlet and Ophelia, precede, instead of interrupt, the development of the great climax in the tragedy—Hamlet's discovery of the King's guilt by means of the representation of a play.





# DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark . . .	Mr. FRANK TYARS.	
HAMLET, son of the late, and nephew to the present King . .	Mr. H. B. IRVING.	
POLONIUS, Lord Chamberlain . .	Mr. TOM REYNOLDS.	
LAERTES, son to Polonius . . . .	Mr. ERIC MAXON.	
HORATIO, friend to Hamlet . .	Mr. STANLEY HOWLETT.	
OSRIC,	} courtiers {	Mr. H. C. HEWITT.
ROSENCRANTZ,		Mr. ARTHUR CURTIS.
GUILDENSTERN,		Mr. J. PATRIC CURWEN.
MARCELLUS,	} officers {	Mr. B. A. PITTAR.
BERNARDO,		Mr. H. HILLIARD.
FRANCISCO, a soldier . . . .	Mr. NORMAN MACOWAN.	
REYNALDO, servant to Polonius . .	Mr. W. GRAHAM.	
First Player . . . . .	Mr. S. BEAUMONT.	
Second Player . . . . .	Mr. W. CASS.	
Priest . . . . .	Mr. H. R. COOK.	
First Gravedigger . . . .	Mr. CHARLES DODSWORTH.	
Second Gravedigger . . . .	Mr. GEORGE SILVER.	
Ghost of Hamlet's Father . . .	Mr. FRANK COCHRANE.	
GERTRUDE, Queen of Denmark and mother to Hamlet . . .	Miss EILY MALYON.	
OPHELIA, daughter to Polonius .	Miss DOROTHEA BAIRD.	
Player Queen . . . . .	Miss E. FRANCES DAVIS.	

*Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers,  
and other Attendants.*

SCENE: DENMARK.

# SYNOPSIS OF SCENERY.

## ACT I.

SCENE 1. ELSINORE—A PLATFORM BEFORE THE CASTLE.

SCENE 2. A ROOM OF STATE IN THE CASTLE.

SCENE 3. THE PLATFORM.

SCENE 4. A MORE REMOTE PART.

## ACT II.

SCENE. A ROOM OF STATE IN THE CASTLE.

## ACT III.

SCENE 1. THE SAME.

SCENE 2. ANOTHER ROOM IN THE SAME.

## ACT IV.

SCENE. A ROOM OF STATE IN THE CASTLE.

## ACT V.

SCENE 1. A CHURCHYARD.

SCENE 2. A HALL IN THE CASTLE.

THE TRAGEDY OF  
HAMLET  
PRINCE OF DENMARK

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ACT FIRST.

SCENE I. *Elsinore. A platform before the castle.*

FRANCISCO *at his post.* Enter to him BERNARDO.

*Ber.* Who's there?

*Fran.* Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.

*Ber.* Long live the king!

*Fran.* Bernardo?

*Ber.* He.

*Fran.* You come most carefully upon your hour.

*Ber.* 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed,  
Francisco.

*Fran.* For this relief much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,  
And I am sick at heart.

*Ber.* Have you had quiet guard?

*Fran.* Not a mouse stirring.

*Ber.* Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,  
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

*Fran.* I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who is  
there?

*Enter* HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

*Hor.* Friends to this ground.

*Mar.* And liegemen to the Dane.

*Fran.* Give you good night.

*Mar.* O, farewell, honest soldier :  
Who hath relieved you ?

*Fran.* Bernardo hath my place.  
Give you good night. [*Exit.*

*Ber.* Welcome, Horatio ; welcome, good Marcellus.

*Mar.* What, has this thing appeared again to-night ?

*Ber.* I have seen nothing.

*Mar.* Horatio says 'tis but our phantasy,  
And will not let belief take hold of him  
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us :  
Therefore I have entreated him along  
With us to watch the minutes of this night,  
That if again this apparition come,  
He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

*Hor.* Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

*Ber.* Sit down a while ;  
And let us once again assail your ears,  
That are so fortified against our story,  
What we have two nights seen.

*Hor.* Well, sit we down,  
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

*Ber.* Last night of all,  
When yond same star that 's westward from the pole,  
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven  
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,  
The bell then beating one,—

*Enter* GHOST.

*Mar.* Peace, break thee off ; look, where it comes again !

*Ber.* In the same figure, like the king that 's dead.

*Mar.* Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

*Ber.* Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

*Hor.* Most like: it harrows me with fear and wonder.

*Ber.* It would be spoke to.

*Mar.* Question it, Horatio.

*Hor.* What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,

Together with that fair and warlike form

In which the majesty of buried Denmark

Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee, speak!

*Mar.* It is offended.

*Ber.* See, it stalks away!

*Hor.* Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak!

[*Exit* GHOST.]

*Mar.* 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

*Ber.* How now, Horatio! you tremble and look pale:

Is not this something more than fantasy?

What think you on't?

*Hor.* Before my God, I might not this believe

Without the sensible and true avouch

Of mine own eyes.

*Mar.* Is it not like the king?

*Hor.* As thou art to thyself:

Such was the very armour he had on

When he the ambitious Norway combated.

'Tis strange.

*Mar.* Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,

With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

*Hor.* In what particular thought to work I know not;

But, in the gross and scope of my opinion,

This bodes some strange eruption to our state.



*Re-enter GHOST.*

But soft, behold ! lo, where it comes again !  
I'll cross it, though it blast me. Stay, illusion !  
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,  
Speak to me :  
If there be any good thing to be done,  
That may to thee do ease and grace to me,  
Speak to me :  
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,  
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,  
O, speak !

*Mar.* 'Tis gone !

[*Exit GHOST.*

We do it wrong, being so majestical,  
To offer it the show of violence.

*Ber.* It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

*Hor.* And then it started like a guilty thing  
Upon a fearful summons.

Break we our watch up ; and by my advice,  
Let us impart what we have seen to-night  
Unto young Hamlet ; for, upon my life,  
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE 2. *A room of state in the castle.*

*Flourish.* Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET,  
POLONIUS, LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS,  
Lords, and Attendants.

*King.* Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's  
death

The memory be green, and that it us befitted  
To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom  
To be contracted in one brow of woe ;  
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature  
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,  
Together with remembrance of ourselves.

Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,  
The imperial jointress to this warlike state,  
Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,—  
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd  
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone  
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.  
And now, Laertes, what 's the news with you?  
You told us of some suit; what is 't, Laertes?

*Laer.* My dread lord,  
Your leave and favour to return to France,  
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,  
To show my duty in your coronation,  
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,  
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France  
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

*King.* Have you your father's leave? What says  
Polonius?

*Pol.* He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow  
leave

By laboursome petition, and at last  
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:  
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

*King.* Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,  
And thy best graces spend it at thy will!

[*Exit* LAERTES.]

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

*Ham.* [*Aside.*] A little more than kin, and less  
than kind.

*King.* How is it that the clouds still hang on  
you?

*Ham.* Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the  
sun.

*Queen.* Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,  
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.  
Do not for ever with thy vailed lids  
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:  
Thou know'st 'tis common; all that lives must die,  
Passing through nature to eternity.

*Ham.* Ay, madam, it is common.

*Queen.*

If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee?

*Ham.* Seems, madam! nay, it is: I know not  
'seems.'

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,  
Nor customary suits of solemn black,  
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,  
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,  
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,  
That can denote me truly: these indeed seem,  
For they are actions that a man might play:  
But I have that within which passeth show;  
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

*King.* 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,  
Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father:  
But, you must know, your father lost a father,  
That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound  
In filial obligation for some term  
To do obsequious sorrow: but to persevere  
In obstinate condolment is a course  
Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief:  
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven.

We pray you, throw to earth  
This unprevailing woe, and think of us  
As of a father: for let the world take note,  
You are the most immediate to our throne,  
Our chiefest courtier, cousin and our son.

*Queen.* Let not thy mother lose her prayers,  
Hamlet:

I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.

*Ham.* I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

*King.* Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply:

Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come;  
This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet  
Sits smiling to my heart: in grace whereof,  
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,



But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,  
And the king's rouse the heaven shall bruit again,  
Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Flourish. Exeunt all but HAMLET.*

*Ham.* O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,  
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew !  
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd  
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter ! O God ! God !  
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable  
Seem to me all the uses of this world !  
Fie on 't ! ah fie ! 'tis an unweeded garden,  
That grows to seed ; things rank and gross in nature  
Possess it merely. That it should come to this !  
But two months dead ! nay, not so much, not  
two ;

So excellent a king ; that was, to this,  
Hyperion to a satyr : so loving to my mother,  
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven  
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth !  
Must I remember ? why, she would hang on him,  
As if increase of appetite had grown  
By what it fed on : and yet, within a month—  
Let me not think on 't—Frailty, thy name is  
woman !—

A little month, or ere those shoes were old  
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,  
Like Niobe, all tears :—why she, even she,—  
O God ! a beast that wants discourse of reason  
Would have mourn'd longer,—married with my  
uncle,

My father's brother, but no more like my father  
Than I to Hercules : within a month ;  
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears  
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,  
She married. O, most wicked speed, to post  
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets !  
It is not, nor it cannot come to good :  
But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue !

*Enter* HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.

*Hor.* Hail to your lordship !

*Ham.* I am glad to see you well :

Horatio,—or I do forget myself.

*Hor.* The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

*Ham.* Sir, my good friend ; I'll change that name  
with you :

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio ?

Marcellus ?

*Mar.* My good lord ?

*Ham.* I am very glad to see you. [*To BER.*]

Good even, sir.

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg ?

*Hor.* A truant disposition, good my lord.

*Ham.* I would not hear your enemy say so,

Nor shall you do my ear that violence,

To make it truster of your own report

Against yourself : I know you are no truant.

But what is your affair in Elsinore ?

We 'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

*Hor.* My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

*Ham.* I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student ;  
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

*Hor.* Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

*Ham.* Thrift, thrift, Horatio ! the funeral baked-  
meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio !

My father !—methinks I see my father.

*Hor.* O where, my lord ?

*Ham.* In my mind's eye, Horatio.

*Hor.* I saw him once ; he was a goodly king.

*Ham.* He was a man, take him for all in all,  
I shall not look upon his like again.

*Hor.* My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

*Ham.* Saw ? who ?

*Hor.* My lord, the king your father.

*Ham.* The king my father !

*Hor.* Season your admiration for a while  
With an attent ear, till I may deliver,  
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,  
This marvel to you.

*Ham.* For God's love, let me hear.

*Hor.* Two nights together had these gentlemen,  
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,  
In the dead vast and middle of the night,  
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,  
Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pe,  
Appears before them, and with solemn march  
Goes slow and stately by them : thrice he walk'd  
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,  
Within his truncheon's length ; whilst they, distill'd  
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,  
Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me  
In dreadful secrecy impart they did ;  
And I with them the third night kept the watch :  
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,  
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,  
The apparition comes : I knew your father ;  
These hands are not more like.

*Ham.* But where was this ?

*Mar.* My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

*Ham.* Did you not speak to it ?

*Hor.* My lord, I did,  
But answer made it none : yet once methought  
It lifted up its head and did address  
Itself to motion, like as it would speak :  
But even then the morning cock crew loud,  
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away  
And vanish'd from our sight.

*Ham.* 'Tis very strange.

*Hor.* As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true,  
And we did think it writ down in our duty  
To let you know of it.

*Ham.* Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.  
Hold you the watch to-night?

*Mar.* { We do, my lord.  
*Ber.* }

*Ham.* Arm'd, say you?

*Mar.* { Arm'd, my lord,  
*Ber.* }

*Ham.* From top to toe?

*Mar.* { My lord, from head to foot.  
*Ber.* }

*Ham.* Then saw you not his face?

*Hor.* O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up.

*Ham.* What, look'd he frowningly?

*Hor.* A countenance more in sorrow than in  
anger.

*Ham.* Pale, or red?

*Hor.* Nay, very pale.

*Ham.* And fix'd his eyes upon you?

*Hor.* Most constantly.

*Ham.* I would I had been there.

*Hor.* It would have much amazed you.

*Ham.* Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?

*Hor.* While one with moderate haste might tell a  
hundred.

*Mar.* { Longer, longer.  
*Ber.* }

*Hor.* Not when I saw 't.

*Ham.* His beard was grizzled? no?

*Hor.* It was, as I have seen it in his life,  
A sable silver'd.

*Ham.* I will watch to-night;  
Perchance 'twill walk again.

*Hor.* I warrant it will.

*Ham.* If it assume my noble father's person,  
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape  
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,  
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,  
Let it be tenable in your silence still,



And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,  
Give it an understanding, but no tongue :  
I will requite your loves. So fare you well :  
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,  
I'll visit you.

*All.* Our duty to your honour.

*Ham.* Your loves, as mine to you : farewell.

[*Exeunt all but HAMLET.*

My father's spirit in arms ! all is not well ;  
I doubt some foul play : would the night were come !  
Till then sit still, my soul : foul deeds will rise,  
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.  
[*Exit.*

*Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.*

*Laer.* My necessities are embark'd : farewell :  
And, sister, as the winds give benefit  
Pray let me hear from you.

*Oph.* Do you doubt that ?

*Laer.* For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,  
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood.  
He may not, as unvalued persons do,  
Carve for himself, for on his choice depends  
The safety and health of this whole state.  
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,  
If with too credent ear you list his songs.  
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister :  
The chariest maid is prodigal enough,  
If she unmask her beauty to the moon :

*Oph.* I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,  
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,  
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,  
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,  
Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,  
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads  
And recks not his own rede.

*Laer.* O, fear me not.  
I stay too long.

*Enter* POLONIUS.

*Pol.* Yet here, Laertes! Aboard, aboard, for shame!

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,  
And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing with thee!

And these few precepts in thy memory  
Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,  
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.  
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.  
Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel,  
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment  
Of each new-hatch'd unfledged comrade. Beware  
Of entrance to a quarrel; but being in,  
Bear 't, that the opposed may beware of thee.  
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice:  
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgement.

Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,  
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy:  
For the apparel oft proclaims the man.  
Neither a borrower nor a lender be:  
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,  
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.  
This above all: to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.  
Farewell: my blessing season this in thee!

*Laer.* Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

*Pol.* The time invites you; go, your servants tend.

*Laer.* Farewell, Ophelia, and remember well  
What I have said to you.

*Oph.* 'Tis in my memory lock'd,  
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

*Laer.* Farewell.

[*Exit.*

*Pol.* What is 't, Ophelia, he hath said to you ?

*Oph.* So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

*Pol.* Marry, well bethought :

'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late

Given private time to you, and you yourself

Have of your audience been most free and bounteous :

What is between you ? give me up the truth.

*Oph.* He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders  
Of his affection to me.

*Pol.* Affection ! pooh ! you speak like a green girl,  
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them ?

*Oph.* I do not know, my lord, what I should  
think.

*Pol.* Marry, I'll teach you : think yourself a  
baby,

That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,

Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more  
dearly ;

You'll tender me a fool.

*Oph.* My lord, he hath importuned me with love  
In honourable fashion.

*Pol.* Ay, fashion you may call it ; go to, go to.

*Oph.* And hath given countenance to his speech,  
my lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

*Pol.* Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do  
know,

When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul

Lends the tongue vows : This is for all :

I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,

Have you so slander any moment leisure,

As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.

Look to 't, I charge you :

*Oph.* I shall obey, my lord.

*Pol.* Come your ways.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE 3. *The platform.*

*Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.*

*Ham.* The air bites shrewdly : it is very cold.

*Hor.* It is a nipping and an eager air.

*Ham.* What hour now ?

*Hor.* I think it lacks of twelve.

*Mar.* No, it is struck.

*Hor.* Indeed ? I heard it not : it then draws near  
the season

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

*[A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off within.]*  
What doth this mean, my lord ?

*Ham.* The king doth wake to-night and takes his  
rouse,

Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels ;  
And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,  
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out  
The triumph of his pledge.

*Hor.* Is it a custom ?

*Ham.* Ay, marry, is't :

But to my mind, though I am native here  
And to the manner born, it is a custom  
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.

*Hor.* Look, my lord, it comes !

*Enter GHOST.*

*Ham.* Angels and ministers of grace defend us !  
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,  
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,  
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,  
Thou comest in such a questionable shape  
That I will speak to thee : I'll call thee Hamlet,  
King, father, royal Dane : O, answer me !  
Let me not burst in ignorance ; but tell  
Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,



Have burst their cerements ; why the sepulchre,  
Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,  
Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws,  
To cast thee up again. What may this mean,  
That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,  
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,  
Making night hideous ; and we fools of nature  
So horribly to shake our disposition  
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls ?  
Say, why is this ? wherefore ? what should we do ?

[*GHOST beckons HAMLET.*

*Hor.* It beckons you to go away with it,  
As if it some impartment did desire  
To you alone.

*Mar.* Look, with what courteous action  
It waves you to a more removed ground :  
But do not go with it.

*Hor.* No, by no means.

*Ham.* It will not speak ; then I will follow it.

*Hor.* Do not, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, what should be the fear ?  
I do not set my life at a pin's fee ;  
And for my soul, what can it do to that,  
Being a thing immortal as itself ?  
It waves me forth again : I'll follow it.

*Hor.* What if it tempt you toward the flood, my  
lord,  
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff  
And there assume some other horrible form,  
And draw you into madness ?

*Ham.* It waves me still.

Go on ; I'll follow thee.

*Mar.* You shall not go, my lord.

*Ham.* Hold off your hands.

*Hor.* Be ruled ; you shall not go.

*Ham.* My fate cries out,  
And makes each petty artery in this body  
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.

Still am I call'd : unhand me, gentlemen ;  
By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me :  
I say, away ! Go on ; I'll follow thee.

[*Excunt* GHOST and HAMLET.]

SCENE 4. *Another part of the platform.*

*Enter* GHOST and HAMLET.

*Ham.* Whither wilt thou lead me ? speak ; I'll go  
no further.

*Ghost.* Mark me.

*Ham.* I will.

*Ghost.* My hour is almost come,  
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames  
Must render up myself.

*Ham.* Alas, poor ghost.

*Ghost.* Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing  
To what I shall unfold.

*Ham.* Speak ; I am bound to hear.

*Ghost.* So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt  
hear.

*Ham.* What ?

*Ghost.* I am thy father's spirit ;  
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,  
And for the day confined to fast in fires,  
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature  
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid  
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,  
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word  
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,  
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their  
spheres,  
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,  
And each particular hair to stand an end,  
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine :  
But this eternal blazon must not be  
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list !  
If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

*Ham.* O God!

*Ghost.* Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

*Ham.* Murder!

*Ghost.* Murder most foul, as in the best it is,  
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

*Ham.* Haste me to know 't, that I, with wings as  
swift

As meditation or the thoughts of love,  
May sweep to my revenge.

*Ghost.* I find thee apt;

Now, Hamlet, hear:

'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,  
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark  
Is by a forged process of my death  
Rankly abused: but know, thou noble youth,  
The serpent that did sting thy father's life  
Now wears his crown.

*Ham.* O my prophetic soul!  
My uncle!

*Ghost.* Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,  
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,—  
Won to his shameful lust

The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen:  
O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!  
From me, whose love was of that dignity  
That it went hand in hand even with the vow  
I made to her in marriage; and to decline  
Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor  
To those of mine!

But, soft! methinks I scent the morning air;  
Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,  
My custom always of the afternoon,  
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,  
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,  
And in the porches of my ears did pour  
The leperous distilment; whose effect  
Holds such an enmity with blood of man  
That swift as quicksilver it courses through

The natural gates and alleys of the body.

So did it mine.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand  
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd :

Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,  
No reckoning made, but sent to my account

With all my imperfections on my head :

*Ham.* O, horrible ! O, horrible ! most horrible !

*Ghost.* If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not ;

Let not the royal bed of Denmark be

A couch for luxury and damned incest.

But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,

Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive

Against thy mother aught : leave her to heaven,

And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,

To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once !

The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,

And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire :

Adieu, adieu ! Hamlet, remember me. [Exit.

*Ham.* O all you host of heaven ! O earth ! what  
else ?

And shall I couple hell ? O, fie ! Hold, hold, my  
heart ;

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,

But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee !

Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat

In this distracted globe. Remember thee !

Yea, from the table of my memory

I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,

All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,

That youth and observation copied there ;

And thy commandment all alone shall live

Within the book and volume of my brain,

Unmix'd with baser matter : yes, by heaven !

O most pernicious woman !

O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain !

My tables,—meet it is I set it down,

That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain ;



At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark.

[Writing.]

So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word ;  
It is 'Adieu, adieu ! Hamlet, remember me.'  
I have sworn 't.

Hor. }  
Mar. } [Within] My lord, my lord !

Mar. Lord Hamlet !

Hor. Heaven secure him !

Mar. Illo, ho, ho, my lord !

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy ! come, bird, come.

Enter HORATIO AND MARCELLUS.

Mar. How is 't, my noble lord ?

Hor. What news, my lord ?

Ham. O, wonderful !

Hor. Good my lord, tell it.

Ham. No ; you will reveal it.

Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven.

Mar. Nor I, my lord.

Ham. How say you, then ; would heart of man  
once think it ?

But you'll be secret ?

Hor. }  
Mar. } Ay, by heaven, my lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Den-  
mark

But he's an arrant knave.

Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from  
the grave

To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right ; you are i' the right ;  
And 'so, without more circumstance at all,  
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part ;  
You as your business and desire shall point you ;  
For every man hath business and desire,  
Such as it is ; and for my own poor part,  
Look you, I'll go pray.

*Hor.* These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

*Ham.* I'm sorry they offend you, heartily ;  
Yes, faith, heartily.

*Hor.* There 's no offence, my lord.

*Ham.* Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,  
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,  
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you :  
For your desire to know what is between us,  
O'ermaster 't as you may. And now, good friends,  
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,  
Give me one poor request.

*Hor.* What is 't, my lord ? we will.

*Ham.* Never make known what you have seen to-night.

*Hor.* } My lord, we will not.  
*Mar.* }

*Ham.* Nay, but swear 't.

*Hor.* In faith,  
My lord, not I.

*Mar.* Nor I, my lord, in faith.

*Ham.* Upon my sword.

*Mar.* We have sworn, my lord, already.

*Ham.* Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

*Ghost.* [*Beneath*] Swear.

*Ham.* Ah, ha, boy ! say'st thou so ? art thou there,  
truepenny ?

Come on : you hear this fellow in the cellarage :  
Consent to swear.

*Hor.* Propose the oath, my lord.

*Ham.* Never to speak of this that you have seen,  
Swear by my sword.

*Ghost.* [*Beneath*] Swear.

*Ham.* Hic et ubique ? then we'll shift our ground.  
Come hither, gentlemen,  
And lay your hands again upon my sword :  
Never to speak of this that you have heard,  
Swear by my sword.

*Ghost* [*Beneath*] Swear.

*Ham.* Well said, old mole ! canst work i' the earth  
so fast ?

A worthy pioner ! Once more remove, good friends.

*Hor.* O day and night, but this is wondrous  
strange !

*Ham.* And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.  
There are more things in heaven and earth,  
Horatio,

Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

But come ;

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,

How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,

As I perchance hereafter shall think meet

To put an antic disposition on,

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall

With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,

Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,

As ' Well, well, we know,' or ' We could, an if we  
would,'

Or ' If we list to speak,' or ' There be, an if they  
might,'

Or such ambiguous giving out, to note

That you know aught of me : this not to do,

So grace and mercy at your most need help you,

Swear.

*Ghost.* [*Beneath*] Swear.

*Ham.* Rest, rest, perturbed spirit ! [*They swear.*]

So, gentlemen,

With all my love I do commend me to you :

And what so poor a man as Hamlet is

May do, to express his love and friending to you,

God' willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together ;

And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.

The time is out of joint : O cursed spite,

That ever I was born to set it right !

Nay, come, let 's go together.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF ACT I.

## ACT SECOND.

SCENE *A room of state in the castle.*

*Enter* POLONIUS *and* REYNALDO.

*Pol.* Give him this money and these notes,  
Reynaldo.

You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,  
Before you visit him, to make inquire  
Of his behaviour.

Farewell!

[*Exit* REYNALDO.]

*Enter* OPHELIA.

How now, Ophelia! what's the matter?

*Oph.* O, my lord, my lord, I have been so  
affrighted!

*Pol.* With what, i' the name of God?

*Oph.* My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,  
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced,  
Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,  
And with a look so piteous in purport  
As if he had been loosed out of hell  
To speak of horrors, he comes before me.

*Pol.* Mad for thy love?

*Oph.* My lord, I do not know,  
But truly I do fear it.

*Pol.* What said he?

*Oph.* He took me by the wrist and held me hard;  
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,  
And with his other hand thus o'er his brow,  
He falls to such perusal of my face  
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;  
At last, a little shaking of mine arm,  
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,  
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound  
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk



And end his being : that done, he lets me go :  
And with his head over his shoulder turn'd,  
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes ;  
For out o' doors he went without their helps,  
And to the last bended their light on me.

*Pol.* Come, I will go seek the king.

This is the very ecstasy of love ;  
What, have you given him any hard words of late ?

*Oph.* No, my good lord ; but, as you did command,  
I did repel his letters and denied  
His access to me.

*Pol.* That hath made him mad.  
Come, go with me ; this must be known.

[*Exit OPHELIA.*

*Flourish.* Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ,  
GUILDENSTERN, and Attendants.

*King.* Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guilden-  
stern !

Moreover that we much did long to see you,  
The need we have to use you did provoke  
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard  
Of Hamlet's transformation ; what it should be,  
More than his father's death,  
I cannot dream of : I entreat you both,  
Being of so young days brought up with him,  
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court  
Some little time : so by your companies  
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather  
So much as from occasion you may glean,  
Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him thus,  
That open'd lies within our remedy.

*Queen.* Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of  
you,  
And sure I am two men there are not living  
To whom he more adheres.

*Ros.* Both your majesties  
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,

Put your dread pleasures more into command  
Than to entreaty.

*Guil.* But we both obey,  
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent  
To lay our service freely at your feet,  
To be commanded.

*King.* Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.

*Queen.* Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz :

And I beseech you instantly to visit  
My too much changed son. Go, some of you,  
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN,  
and some Attendants.]

*Pol.* But I do think, or else this brain of mine  
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure  
As it hath used to do, that I have found  
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

*King.* O, speak of that ; that do I long to hear.

*Pol.* My liege, and madam,  
I have a daughter,—have while she is mine,—  
Who in her duty and obedience, mark,  
Hath given me this : now gather and surmise. [*Reads.*

‘To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most  
beautified Ophelia,’—

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase ; ‘beautified’  
is a vile phrase ; but you shall hear. Thus : [*Reads.*

‘In her excellent white bosom, these,’ &c.

*Queen.* Came this from Hamlet to her ?

*Pol.* Good madam, stay awhile ; I will be faithful.

[*Reads.*

‘Doubt thou the stars are fire ;  
Doubt that the sun doth move ;  
Doubt truth to be a liar ;  
But never doubt I love.

‘Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this  
machine is to him, HAMLET.’

This in obedience hath my daughter shown me.

*King.* But how hath she  
Received his love?

*Pol.* What do you think of me?

*King.* As of a man faithful and honourable.

*Pol.* I would fain prove so.

*King.* Do you think this?

*Queen.* It may be, very like.

*Pol.* [*Pointing to his head and shoulder*] Take this  
from this, if this be otherwise:

If circumstances lead me, I will find  
Where truth is hid.

*King.* How may we try it further?

*Pol.* You know, sometimes he walks for hours  
together

Here in the lobby.

*Queen.* So he does, indeed.

*Enter OPHELIA.*

*Pol.* I'll loose my daughter to him :  
Be you and I behind an arras then ;  
Mark the encounter : if he love her not,  
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,  
Let me be no assistant for a state,  
But keep a farm and carters.

*King.* We will try it.

*Queen.* But look where sadly the poor wretch  
comes reading.

*King.* Sweet Gertrude, leave us.

*Queen.* I shall obey you :

And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish  
That your good beauties be the happy cause  
Of Hamlet's wildness : so shall I hope your virtues  
Will bring him to his wonted way again,  
To both your honours.

*Oph.* Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit QUEEN.*]

*Pol.* Ophelia, walk you here. [*To OPHELIA*] Read on this book ;

That show of such an exercise may colour

Your loneliness.

[*Exit OPHELIA.*]

I hear him coming : let's withdraw, my lord.

[*Exeunt KING and POLONIUS.*]

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* To be, or not to be : that is the question :  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,  
And by opposing end them. To die : to sleep ;  
No more ; and by a sleep to say we end  
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks  
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation  
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep ;  
To sleep : perchance to dream : ay, there's the rub ;  
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,  
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
Must give us pause : there's the respect  
That makes calamity of so long life ;  
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,  
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,  
The insolence of office, and the spurns  
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,  
When he himself might his quietus make  
With a bare bodkin ? who would fardels bear,  
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,  
But that the dread of something after death,  
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn  
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,  
And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
Than fly to others that we know not of ?  
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,  
And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,



And enterprises of great pitch and moment  
With this regard their currents turn awry  
And lose the name of action. Soft you now !  
The fair Ophelia ! Nymph, in thy orisons  
Be all my sins remember'd.

*Oph.*

Good my lord,

How does your honour for this many a day ?

*Ham.* I humbly thank you : well, well, well.

*Oph.* My lord, I have remembrances of yours,  
That I have longed long to re-deliver ;  
I pray you, now receive them.

*Ham.*

No, not I ;

I never gave you aught.

*Oph.* My honour'd lord, you know right well you  
did ;

And with them words of so sweet breath composed  
As made the things more rich : their perfume lost,  
Take these again ; for to the noble mind  
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.  
There, my lord.

*Ham.* Ha, ha ! are you honest ?

*Oph.* My lord ?

*Ham.* Are you fair ?

*Oph.* What means your lordship ?

*Ham.* That if you be honest and fair, your honesty  
should admit no discourse to your beauty.

*Oph.* Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce  
than with honesty ?

*Ham.* Ay, truly ; for the power of beauty will  
sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd  
than the force of honesty can translate beauty into  
his likeness : this was sometime a paradox, but now  
the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

*Oph.* Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

*Ham.* You should not have believed me ; for virtue  
cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish  
of it : I loved you not.

*Oph.* I was the more deceived.

*Ham.* Get thee to a nunnery: why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between heaven and earth! We are arrant knaves all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Farewell. Where's your father?

*Oph.* At home, my lord.

*Ham.* Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in 's own house. Farewell.

*Oph.* O, help him, you sweet heavens!

*Ham.* If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go: farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

*Oph.* O heavenly powers, restore him!

*Ham.* I have heard of your paintings too, well enough; God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on 't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [Exit.]

*Oph.* O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!  
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue,  
sword:  
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,  
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,

The observed of all observers, quite, quite down !  
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,  
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,  
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,  
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh ;  
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth  
Blasted with ecstasy : O, woe is me,  
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see !

*Re-enter KING and POLONIUS.*

*King.* Love ! his affections do not that way tend ;  
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,  
Was not like madness. There's something in his  
soul

O'er which his melancholy sits on brood.  
He shall with speed to England,  
For the demand of our neglected tribute :  
What think you on 't ?

\* *Pol.* Well, something it is, my lord, content you  
awhile :

I will myself go feel him ; let me work,  
I'll try him every way : see where he comes,  
Send you those gentlemen, let me alone  
To find the depth of this.

*King.* It shall be so :  
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

*[Exeunt.]*

*Enter HAMLET, reading.*

*Pol.* How does my good Lord Hamlet ?

*Ham.* Well, God-a-mercy.

*Pol.* Do you know me, my lord ?

*Ham.* Excellent well ; you are a fishmonger.

*Pol.* 'Not I, my lord.

*Ham.* Then I would you were so honest a man.

*Pol.* Honest, my lord !

*Ham.* Ay, sir ; to be honest, as this world goes, is  
to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

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\* This speech of Polonius is from the Quarto of 1603.

*Pol.* That's very true, my lord.

*Ham.* For if the sun breeds maggots in a dead dog, being a god kissing carrion— Have you a daughter?

*Pol.* I have, my lord.

*Ham.* Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a blessing; but not as your daughter may conceive, —friend, look to 't.

*Pol.* [*Aside*] Still harping on my daughter: yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a fishmonger: he is far gone: far gone. What do you read, my lord?

*Ham.* Words, words, words.

*Pol.* What is the matter, my lord?

*Ham.* Between who?

*Pol.* I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

*Ham.* Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, sir, shall grow old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward.

*Pol.* [*Aside*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in 't. Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

*Ham.* Into my grave.

*Pol.* Indeed, that's out of the air. [*Aside*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

*Ham.* You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal: except my life, except my life, except my life.

*Pol.* Fare you well, my lord.

*Ham.* These tedious old fools!

*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Pol.* You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.



*Ros.* [To *POLONIUS*] God save you, sir!

[*Exit* *POLONIUS*.]

*Guil.* My honoured lord!

*Ros.* My most dear lord!

*Ham.* My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do you both? What 's the news?

*Ros.* None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

*Ham.* Then is doomsday near: but your news is not true. Let me question more in particular: what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

*Guil.* Prison, my lord!

*Ham.* Denmark's a prison.

*Ros.* We think not so, my lord.

*Ham.* Why, then 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

*Ros.* Why, then your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind.

*Ham.* O God, I could be bounded in a nut-shell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams. Shall we to the court?

*Ros.* }  
*Guil.* } We 'll wait upon you.

*Ham.* No such matter: I will not sort you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

*Ros.* To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

*Ham.* Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

*Guil.* What should we say, my lord?

*Ham.* Why, any thing, but to the purpose. You

were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

*Ros.* To what end, my lord?

*Ham.* That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no.

*Ros.* [*Aside to GUIL.*] What say you?

*Ham.* [*Aside*] Nay then, I have an eye of you.—If you love me, hold not off.

*Guil.* My lord, we were sent for.

*Ham.* I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestic roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me; no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

*Ros.* My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

*Ham.* Why did you laugh then, when I said 'man delights not me'?

*Ros.* To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive

from you: we coted them on the way; and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

*Ham.* He that plays the king shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me. What players are they?

*Ros.* Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

*Ham.* Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? are they so followed?

*Ros.* No, indeed, are they not.

*Ham.* It is not very strange; for my uncle is king of Denmark, and those that would make mows at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of trumpets within.*]

*Guil.* There are the players.

*Ham.* Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come then. You are welcome: but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

*Guil.* In what, my dear lord?

*Ham.* I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

*Re-enter* POLONIUS.

*Pol.* Well be with you, gentlemen!

*Ham.* Hark you, Guildenstern; and you too: at each ear a hearer: that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddling clouts.

*Ros.* Happily he's the second time come to them; for they say an old man is twice a child.

*Ham.* I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players; mark it. You say right, sir: o' Monday morning; 'twas so, indeed.

*Pol.* My lord, I have news to tell you.

*Ham.* My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

*Pol.* The actors are come hither, my lord.

*Ham.* Buz, buz!

*Pol.* Upon my honour,—

*Ham.* Then came each actor on his ass,—

*Pol.* The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men.

*Ham.* O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

*Pol.* What a treasure had he, my lord?

*Ham.* Why,

‘One fair daughter, and no more,  
The which he loved passing well.’

*Pol.* [*Aside*] Still on my daughter.

*Ham.* Am I not i’ the right, old Jephthah?

*Pol.* If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

*Ham.* Nay, that follows not.

*Pol.* What follows, then, my lord?

*Ham.* Why,

‘As by lot, God wot,’  
and then you know,

‘It came to pass, as most like it was,’—  
the first row of the pious chanson will show you more; for look, where my abridgement comes.

*Enter four or five Players.*

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all. O, my old friend! Why, thy face is valanced since I saw thee last; comest thou to beard me in Denmark? What, my young lady and mistress! By ’r lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Masters, you are all welcome. We ’ll e’en to ’t like



French falconers, fly at any thing we see: we'll have a speech straight: come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

*First Play.* What speech, my good lord?

*Ham.* I heard thee speak me a speech once; but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general: but it was an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. One speech in it I chiefly loved: 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter: if it live in your memory, begin at this line; let me see, let me see;

'The rugged Pyrrhus, like th' Hyrcanian beast,'  
It is not so: it begins with 'Pyrrhus.'

'The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,  
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble,  
Old grandsire Priam seeks.'

So, proceed you.

*Pol.* 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good accent and good discretion.

*First Play.* 'Anon he finds him  
Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,  
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,  
Repugnant to command: unequal match'd,  
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage strikes wide;  
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword  
The unnerved father falls.  
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall  
On Mars's armour, forged for proof eterne,  
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword  
Now falls on Priam.  
Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune!'

*Pol.* This is too long.

*Ham.* It shall to the barber's with your beard.  
Prithee, say on: come to Hecuba.



*First Play.* 'But who, O, who had seen the mobled queen—'

*Ham.* 'The mobled queen'?

*Pol.* That's good; 'mobled queen' is good.

*First Play.* 'Run barefoot up and down, threatening the flames;

A clout upon that head

Where late the diadem stood; and for a robe,

A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up:

Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd

'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounced:

But if the gods themselves did see her then,

When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport

In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,

The instant burst of clamour that she made,

Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven

And passion in the gods.'

*Pol.* Look, whether he has not turned his colour and has tears in 's eyes. Prithee, no more.

*Ham.* 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon. Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used, for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time: after your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live.

*Pol.* My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

*Ham.* God's bodykins, man, much better: use every man after his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity: the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

*Pol.* Come, sirs.

*Ham.* Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow. [*Exit POLONIUS with all the Players but the First.*] My good friends, I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

*Ros.* Good my lord !

*Ham.* Ay, so, God be wi' ye! [*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*] Dost thou hear me, old friend ; can you play the Murder of Gonzago ?

*First Play.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* We'll ha't to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down and insert in 't, could you not ?

*First Play.* Ay, my lord.

*Ham.* Very well. Follow that lord ; and look you mock him not. [*Exit First Player.*]

Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I !  
Is it not monstrous that this player here,  
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,  
Could force his soul so to his own conceit  
That from her working all his visage wann'd ;  
Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,  
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting  
With forms to his conceit ? and all for nothing !  
For Hecuba !

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,  
That he should weep for her ? What would he do,  
Had he the motive and the cue for passion  
That I have ? He would drown the stage with tears  
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,  
Make mad the guilty and appal the free,  
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed  
The very faculties of eyes and ears.

Yet I,

A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,  
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,  
And can say nothing ; no, not for a king,  
Upon whose property and most dear life  
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward ?  
Who calls me villain ? breaks my pate across ?  
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face ?

Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the throat,

As deep as to the lungs? who does me this?

Ha!

'Swounds, I should take it: for it cannot be

But I am pigeon-liver'd and lack gall

To make oppression bitter, or ere this

I should have fatted all the region kites

With this slave's offal: bloody, bawdy villain!

Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!

O, vengeance!

Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,

That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,

Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,

Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,

And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,

A scullion!

Fie upon 't! foh! About, my brain! Hum, I have heard

That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,

Have by the very cunning of the scene

Been struck so to the soul that presently

They have proclaim'd their malefactions;

For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak

With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players

Play something like the murder of my father

Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;

I'll tent him to the quick; if he but blench,

I know my course. The spirit that I have seen

May be the devil; and the devil hath power

To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps

Out of my weakness and my melancholy,

As he is very potent with such spirits,

Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds

More relative than this. The play 's the thing

Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

END OF ACT II.

## ACT THIRD.

SCENE I. *A room in the castle.**Enter HAMLET and Players.*

*Ham.* Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

*First Play.* I warrant your honour.

*Ham.* Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that neither having the accent of Christians



nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

*First Play.* I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir.

*Ham.* O, reform it altogether.

*Enter* POLONIUS.

How now, my lord! will the king hear this piece of work?

*Pol.* And the queen too, and that presently.

*Ham.* Bid the players make haste.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

*Ham.* Horatio!

*Enter* HORATIO.

*Hor.* Here, sweet lord, at your service.

*Ham.* Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man  
As e'er my conversation coped withal.

*Hor.* O, my dear lord,—

*Ham.* Nay, do not think I flatter;  
For what advancement may I hope from thee,  
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits,  
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be  
flatter'd?

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,  
And could of men distinguish, her election  
Hath seal'd thee for herself: for thou hast been  
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;  
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards  
Has ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are those  
Whose blood and judgement are so well commingled  
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger  
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man  
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him  
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,  
As I do thee. Something too much of this.  
There is a play to-night before the king;



One scene of it comes near the circumstance  
Which I have told thee of my father's death :  
I prithee, when thou seest that act a-foot,  
Even with the very comment of thy soul  
Observe my uncle : if his occulted guilt  
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,  
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,  
And my imaginations are as foul  
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note ;  
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,  
And after we will both our judgements join  
In censure of his seeming.  
They are coming to the play : I must be idle :  
Get you a place.

*Danish march. A flourish. Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and other Lords attendant, with the Guard carrying torches.*

*King.* How fares our cousin Hamlet ?

*Ham.* Excellent, i' faith ; of the chameleon's dish :  
I eat the air, promise-crammed : you cannot feed  
capons so.

*King.* I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet ;  
these words are not mine.

*Ham.* No, nor mine now. [*To POLONIUS*] My  
lord, you played once i' the university, you say ?

*Pol.* That did I, my lord, and was accounted a  
good actor.

*Ham.* What did you enact ?

*Pol.* I did enact Julius Cæsar : I was killed i' the  
Capitol ; Brutus killed me.

*Ham.* It was a brute part of him to kill so capital  
a calf there. Be the players ready ?

*Ros.* Ay, my lord ; they stay upon your patience.

*Queen.* Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

*Ham.* No, good mother, here's metal more attrac-  
tive.

*Pol. [To the King]* O, ho! do you mark that?

*Ham.* Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

*[Lying down at OPHELIA'S feet.]*

*Oph.* You are merry, my lord.

*Ham.* O God, your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within 's two hours.

*Oph.* Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

*Ham.* So long? O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there 's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year: but, by 'r lady, he must build churches then.

*[Hautboys play.]*

*Enter Prologue.*

*Oph.* What means this, my lord?

*Ham.* Marry, this is miching mallecho: it means mischief. We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

*Pro.* For us, and for our tragedy,  
Here stooping to your clemency,  
We beg your hearing patiently.

*Ham.* Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

*Oph.* 'Tis brief, my lord.

*Ham.* As woman's love.

*Enter two Players, KING and QUEEN.*

*P. King.* Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round

Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbed ground,  
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands  
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

*P. Queen.* So many journeys may the sun and moon  
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!

*P. King.* Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;

My operant powers their functions leave to do:

And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,  
Honour'd, beloved; and haply one as kind  
For husband shalt thou—

*P. Queen.* O, confound the rest!  
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:  
In second husband let me be accurst!  
None wed the second but who kill'd the first.

*Ham. [Aside]* Wormwood, wormwood.

*P. King.* I do believe you think what now you  
speak,  
But what we do determine oft we break.  
What to ourselves in passion we propose,  
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.  
So think thou wilt no second husband wed,  
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.

*P. Queen.* Nor earth to me give food nor heaven  
light!

Sport and repose lock from me day and night!  
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,  
If, once a widow, ever I be wife.

*P. King.* 'Tis deeply sworn.

*Ham.* If she should break it now!

*P. King.* Sweet, leave me here awhile.  
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile  
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*]

*P. Queen.* Sleep rock thy brain;  
And never come mischance between us twain!  
[*Exit.*]

*Ham.* Madam, how like you this play?

*Queen.* The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

*Ham.* O, but she 'll keep her word.

*King.* Have you heard the argument? Is there  
no offence in 't?

*Ham.* No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest; no  
offence i' the world.

*King.* What do you call the play?

*Ham.* The Mouse-trap. This play is the image  
of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's

name; his wife, Baptista: you shall see anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work; but what o' that? your majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not: let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

*Enter LUCIANUS.*

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

*Oph.* You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

*Ham.* I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.—Begin, murderer; leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come: 'the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.'

*Luc.* Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and  
time agreeing;  
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;  
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,  
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,  
Thy natural magic and dire property,  
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

*[Pours the poison into the sleeper's ear.]*

*Ham.* He poisons him i' the garden for his estate.  
His name 's Gonzago: the story is extant, and written  
in very choice Italian: you shall see anon how the  
murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife. *[The*  
*KING rises.]* What, frightened with false fire!

*King.* Give me some light. Away!

*All.* Lights, lights, lights! Away, away!

*[Exeunt all but HAMLET and HORATIO.]*

*Ham.* Why, let the stricken deer go weep,  
The hart ungalled play;

For some must watch, while some must sleep:  
Thus runs the world away.

O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a  
thousand pound. Didst perceive?

*Hor.* Very well, my lord.

*Ham.* Upon the talk of the poisoning?



*Hor.* I did very well note him.

*Ham.* Ah, ha! Come, some music! come, the recorders!

For if the king like not the comedy,

Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy.

Come, some music!

*Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*

*Guil.* Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

*Ham.* Sir, a whole history.

*Guil.* The king, sir,—

*Ham.* Ay, sir, what of him?

*Guil.* Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

*Ham.* With drink, sir?

*Guil.* No, my lord, rather with choler.

*Ham.* Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to the doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

*Guil.* Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

*Ham.* I am tame, sir: pronounce.

*Guil.* The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

*Ham.* You are welcome.

*Guil.* Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer.

*Ham.* Sir, I cannot.

*Guil.* What, my lord?

*Ham.* Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased: but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; my mother, you say,—

*Ros.* Then thus she says; your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

*Ham.* O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.



Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.

*Re-enter HORATIO with recorders.*

O, the recorders! let me see one. To withdraw with you:—why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. It is as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge!

*Ros.* Take you me for a sponge, my lord ?

*Ham.* Ay, sir ; a sponge that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end : he keeps them, like an ape doth nuts, in the corner of his jaw ; first mouthed, to be last swallowed : when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again. You shall, you shall !

*Ros.* I understand you not, my lord.

*Ham.* I am glad of it : a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

*Re-enter POLONIUS.*

God bless you, sir !

*Pol.* My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

*Ham.* Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel ?

*Pol.* By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

*Ham.* Methinks it is like a weasel.

*Pol.* It is backed like a weasel.

*Ham.* Or like a whale ?

*Pol.* Very like a whale.

*Ham.* Then I will come to my mother by and by. They fool me to the top of my bent. I will come by and by.

*Pol.* I will say so.

[*Exit POLONIUS.*]

*Ham.* 'By and by' is easily said. Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt all but HAMLET.*]

'Tis now the very witching time of night,  
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out  
Contagion to this world : now could I drink hot  
blood,

And do such bitter business as the day  
Would quake to look on. Soft ! now to my mother.  
O heart, lose not thy nature ; let not ever

The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom :  
Let me be cruel, not unnatural :  
I will speak daggers to her, but use none.

SCENE 2. *The Queen's closet.*

*Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS.*

*Pol.* He will come straight. Look you lay home  
to him :  
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,  
And that your grace hath screen'd and stood be-  
tween  
Much heat and him. I'll sconce me even here.  
Pray you, be round with him.

*Ham.* [*Within*] Mother, mother, mother !

*Queen.* Withdraw, I hear him coming.

[*POLONIUS hides behind the arras.*]

*Enter HAMLET.*

*Ham.* Now, mother, what's the matter ?

*Queen.* Hamlet, thou hast thy father much of-  
fended.

*Ham.* Mother, you have my father much offended.

*Queen.* Come, come, you answer with an idle  
tongue.

*Ham.* Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

*Queen.* Why, how now, Hamlet !

*Ham.* What's the matter now ?

*Queen.* Have you forgot me ?

*Ham.* No, by the rood, not so :  
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife ;  
And—would it were not so !—you are my mother.

*Queen.* Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can  
speak.

*Ham.* Come, come, and sit you down ; you shall  
not budge ;

You go not till I set you up a glass  
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

*Queen.* What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder  
me?

Help, help, ho!

*Pol. [Behind]* What, ho! help, help, help!

*Ham. [Drawing]* How now! a rat? Dead, for a  
ducat, dead!

*[Makes a pass through the arras.]*

*Pol. [Behind]* O, I am slain! *[Falls and dies.]*

*Queen.* O me, what hast thou done?

*Ham.* Nay, I know not: is it the king?

*Queen.* O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

*Ham.* A bloody deed! almost as bad, good  
mother,

As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

*Queen.* As kill a king!

*Ham.* Ay, lady, 'twas my word.

*[Lifts up the arras and discovers POLONIUS.]*

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;

Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.—

Leave wringing of your hands: peace! sit you down,

And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,

If it be made of penetrable stuff;

If damned custom have not brass'd it so,

That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

*Queen.* What have I done that thou dar'st wag  
thy tongue

In noise so rude against me?

*Ham.*

Such an act

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,

Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose

From the fair forehead of an innocent love,

And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows

As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed

As from the body of contraction plucks

The very soul, and sweet religion makes



A rhapsody of words : heaven's face doth glow ;  
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,  
With tristful visage, as against the doom,  
Is thought-sick at the act.

*Queen.* Ay me, what act ;  
That roars so loud and thunders in the index ?

*Ham.* Look here, upon this picture, and on this,  
The counterfeited presentment of two brothers.  
See what a grace was seated on this brow ;  
Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself,  
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command ;  
A station like the herald Mercury  
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill ;  
A combination and a form indeed,  
Where every god did seem to set his seal  
To give the world assurance of a man :  
This was your husband. Look you now, what follows :  
Here is your husband ; like a mildew'd ear,  
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes ?  
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,  
And batten on this moor ? Ha ! have you eyes ?  
You cannot call it love, for at your age  
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it 's humble,  
And waits upon the judgement : and what judgement  
Would step from this to this ?  
O shame ! where is thy blush ? Rebellious hell,  
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,  
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax  
And melt in her own fire :

*Queen.* O Hamlet, speak no more :  
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul,  
And there I see such black and grained spots  
As will not leave their tinct.

*Ham.* Nay, but to live  
In the rank sweat of an incestuous bed,—

*Queen.* No more, sweet Hamlet.

*Ham.* A murderer and a villain ;  
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe



Of your precedent lord ; a vice of kings ;  
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,  
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole  
And put it in his pocket !

*Queen.* No more !

*Ham.* A king of shreds and patches—

*Enter GHOST.*

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,  
You heavenly guards ! What would your gracious  
figure ?

*Queen.* Alas, he 's mad !

*Ham.* Do you not come your tardy son to chide,  
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by  
The important acting of your dread command ?  
O, say !

*Ghost.* Do not forget : this visitation  
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.  
But look, amazement on thy mother sits :  
O, step between her and her fighting soul :  
Speak to her, Hamlet.

*Ham.* How is it with you, lady ?

*Queen.* Alas, how is 't with you,  
That you do bend your eye on vacancy  
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse ?  
O gentle son,  
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper  
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look ?

*Ham.* On him, on him ! Look you how pale he  
glares !

His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,  
Would make them capable. Do not look upon me,  
Lest with this piteous action you convert  
My stern effects : then what I have to do  
Will want true colour ; tears perchance for blood.

*Queen.* To whom do you speak this ?

*Ham.* Do you see nothing there ?

*Queen.* Nothing at all ; yet all that is I see.

*Ham.* Nor did you nothing hear ?

*Queen.* No, nothing but ourselves.

*Ham.* Why, look you there ! look, how it steals away !

My father, in his habit as he lived !

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal !

[*Exit GHOST.*]

*Queen.* This is the very coinage of your brain :  
This bodiless creation ecstasy  
Is very cunning in.

*Ham.* Ecstasy !  
My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,  
And makes as healthful music : it is not madness  
That I have utter'd : bring me to the test,  
And I the matter will re-word, which madness  
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,  
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,  
That not your trespass but my madness speaks :  
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,  
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,  
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven ;  
Repent what 's past, avoid what is to come,

*Queen.* O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

*Ham.* O, throw away the worser part of it,  
And live the purer with the other half.  
Good night : but go not to my uncle's bed ;  
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.  
And when you are desirous to be blest,  
I 'll blessing beg of you. Mother, good night.  
For this same lord, [*Pointing to POLONIUS.*]  
I do repent : but heaven hath pleased it so,  
To punish me with this, and this with me,  
That I must be their scourge and minister.  
I will bestow him, and will answer well  
The death I gave him. Once again, good night.  
I must be cruel, only to be kind :  
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.

END OF ACT III.

## ACT FOURTH.

SCENE. *Elsinore. A room in the castle.**Enter QUEEN and HORATIO.**Queen.* I will not speak with her.*Hor.* She is importunate, indeed distract :  
'Twere good she were spoken with, for she may  
strew

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

*[Exit HORATIO.]**Queen.* Let her come in.*[Aside]* To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,  
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss.*Re-enter HORATIO with OPHELIA.**Oph.* Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark ?*Queen.* How now, Ophelia !*Oph.* *[Sings]* How should I your true love know  
From another one ?By his cockle hat and staff  
And his sandal shoon.*Queen.* Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song ?*Oph.* Say you ? nay, pray you, mark.*[Sings]* He is dead and gone, lady,

He is dead and gone ;

At his head a grass-green turf,

At his heels a stone.

Oh, oh !

*Queen.* Nay, but Ophelia,—*Oph.* Pray you, mark.*[Sings]* White his shroud as the mountain snow,—*Enter KING.**Queen.* Alas, look here, my lord.*Oph.* *[Sings]* Larded with sweet flowers ;  
Which bewept to the grave did go  
With true-love showers.

*King.* How do you, pretty lady?

*Oph.* Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

*King.* Conceit upon her father.

*Oph.* Pray you, let's have no words of this; but when they ask you what it means, say you this:

[*Sings*] To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day

All in the morning betime,

And I a maid at your window,

To be your Valentine.

*King.* How long hath she been thus?

*Oph.* I hope all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it: and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies; good night, good night. [*Exit.*]

*King.* Follow her close; give her good watch; I pray you. [*Exit HORATIO.*]

O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs  
All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,  
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,  
But in battalions! [*A noise within.*]

*Queen.* Alack, what noise is this?

*Enter GENTLEMAN.*

*Gent.* Save yourself, my lord:  
Young Laertes, in a riotous head,  
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord;  
They cry 'Choose we; Laertes shall be king!  
Laertes king!'

*Enter LAERTES, armed.*

*Laer.* Where is this king? Sirs, stand you all  
without.  
O thou vile king,  
Give me my father!

*Queen.* Calmly, good Laertes.



*King.* What is the cause, Laertes,  
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?  
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:  
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,  
That treason can but peep to what it would.  
Tell me, Laertes,  
Why thou art thus incensed: let him go, Gertrude:

*Laer.* Where is my father?

*King.* Dead.

*Queen.* But not by him.

*King.* Let him demand his fill.

*Laer.* How came he dead? I'll not be juggled  
with:

To hell, allegiance! to this point I stand,  
Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged  
Most thoroughly for my father.

*King.* Who shall stay you?

*Laer.* My will, not all the world:

And for my means, I'll husband them so well,  
They shall go far with little.

*King.* Good Laertes,  
That I am guiltless of your father's death,  
And am most sensibly in grief for it,  
It shall as level to your judgement pierce  
As day does to your eye.

*Laer.* What noise is that?

*Re-enter OPHELIA.*

O rose of May!

Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!  
O heavens! is't possible a young maid's wits  
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?

*Op'h.* [*Sings*] They bore him barefaced on the bier:  
And in his grave rain'd many a tear,—  
Fare you well, my dove!

*Laer.* Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade  
revenge,  
It could not move thus.



*Oph.* [*Sings*] You must sing down a-down,  
An you call him a-down-a.

O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false steward,  
that stole his master's daughter.

*Laer.* This nothing 's more than matter.

*Oph.* There 's rosemary, that 's for remembrance:  
pray you, love, remember: and there is pansies,  
that 's for thoughts.

*Laer.* A document in madness; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

*Oph.* There 's fennel for you, and columbines:  
there 's rue for you: and here 's some for me: we  
may call it herb of grace o' Sundays: O, you must  
wear your rue with a difference. There 's a daisy:  
I would give you some violets, but they withered all  
when my father died: they say a' made a good end,—

[*Sings*] For bonnie sweet Robin is all my joy.

*Laer.* Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,  
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

*Oph.* [*Sings*] And will a' not come again?

And will a' not come again?

No, no, he is dead,

Go to thy death-bed,

He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan:

God ha' mercy on his soul!

And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God be  
wi' you. [*Exit.*]

*King.* Laertes, I must commune with your grief,  
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,  
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,  
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:  
If by direct or by collateral hand  
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,  
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,  
To you in satisfaction.

*Enter a Messenger, with letters.*

How now ! what news ?

*Mess.* Letters, my lord, from Hamlet :  
This to your majesty ; this to the queen.

*King.* Laertes, you shall hear them. Leave us.

*[Exit Messenger.]*

*[Reads]* ‘ High and mighty, You shall know I am  
set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg  
leave to see your kingly eyes : when I shall, first  
asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion  
of my sudden and more strange return.

‘ HAMLET.’

What should this mean ? Are all the rest come  
back ?

Or is it some abuse, and no such thing ?

*Laer.* Know you the hand ?

*King.* ’Tis Hamlet’s character. ‘ Naked ’ !  
And in a postscript here, he says ‘ alone.’  
Can you advise me ?

*Laer.* I’m lost in it, my lord. But let him come ;  
It warms the very sickness in my heart,  
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,  
‘ Thus didest thou.’

*King.* If it be so, Laertes,—  
Will you be ruled by me ?

*Laer.* Ay, my lord ;  
So you will not o’errule me to a peace.

*King.* To thine own peace.  
You have been talk’d of since your travel much,  
And that in Hamlet’s hearing, for a quality  
Wherein, they say, you shine.

*Laer.* What part is that, my lord ?

*King.* A very riband in the cap of youth.  
Here was a gentleman from Normandy,  
He made confession of you,  
And gave you such a masterly report,  
For art and exercise in your defence,

And for your rapier most especial,  
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed  
If one could match you : Sir, this report of his  
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy  
That he could nothing do but wish and beg  
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.  
Now, out of this—

*Laer.* What out of this, my lord ?

*King.* Hamlet return'd shall know you are come  
home :

We'll put on those shall praise your excellence  
And set a double varnish on the fame  
The Frenchman gave you ; bring you in fine to-  
gether,

And wager on your heads : he, being remiss,  
Most generous and free from all contriving,  
Will not peruse the foils, so that with ease,  
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose  
A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice  
Requite him for your father.

*Laer.* I will do 't ;

And for that purpose I'll anoint my sword,  
That, if I gall him slightly, it may be death.

*King.* Soft ! let me see :

We'll make a solemn wager on your connings :  
I ha 't :

When in your motion you are hot and dry—  
As make your bouts more violent to that end—  
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared him  
A chalice for the nonce ; whereon but sipping,  
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,  
Our purpose may hold there.

*Enter QUEEN.*

*Queen.* One woe doth tread upon another's heel,  
So fast they follow : your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

*Laer.* Drown'd ! O, where ?

*Queen.* There is a willow grows aslant a brook,  
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream ;

There with fantastic garlands did she come  
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples ;  
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds  
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke ;  
When down her weedy trophies and herself  
Fell in the weeping brook.

*Laer.* Alas, then she is drown'd !

*Queen.* Drown'd, drown'd.

*Laer.* Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,  
And therefore I forbid my tears : but yet  
It is our trick ; nature her custom holds,  
Let shame say what it will :  
I have a speech of fire that fain would blaze,  
But that this folly douts it.

END OF ACT IV.



## ACT FIFTH.

SCENE I. *A churchyard.*

*Enter two Clowns, with spades, etc.*

*First Clo.* Is she to be buried in Christian burial that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

*Sec. Clo.* I tell thee she is; and therefore make her grave straight: the crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.

*First Clo.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

*Sec. Clo.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.

*First Clo.* Why, there thou say'st: and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers: they hold up Adam's profession.

*Sec. Clo.* Was he a gentleman?

*First Clo.* A' was the first that ever bore arms. I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

*Sec. Clo.* Go to.

*First Clo.* What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

*Sec. Clo.* The gallows-maker: for that frame out-lives a thousand tenants.

*First Clo.* I like thy wit well, in good faith: the gallows does well; but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now, thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church: argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To 't again, come.

*Sec. Clo.* 'Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?'

*First Clo.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

*Sec. Clo.* Marry, now I can tell.

*First Clo.* To 't.

*Sec. Clo.* Mass, I cannot tell.

*Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, afar off.*

*First Clo.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating, and when you are asked this question next, say 'a grave-maker': the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan; fetch me a stoup of liquor.

*[Exit Sec. Clown.]*

*[He digs, and sings.]*

In youth, when I did love, did love,  
Methought it was very sweet,  
To contract, O, the time, for-a my behove,  
O, methought, there-a was nothing-a meet.

*Ham.* Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

*Hor.* Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

*Ham.* 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

*First Clo.* *[Sings]* But age, with his stealing steps,  
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,  
And hath shipped me intil the land,  
As if I had never been such.

*[Throws up a skull.]*

*Ham.* That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! It might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

*Hor.* It might, my lord.

*Ham.* Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with 'em? mine ache to think on 't.

*First Clo.* [*Sings*] A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,  
For and a shrouding sheet :  
O, a pit of clay for to be made  
For such a guest is meet.

[*Throws up another skull.*]

*Ham.* There 's another : why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave 's this, sirrah?

*First Clo.* Mine, sir.

[*Sings*] O, a pit of clay for to be made  
For such a guest is meet.

*Ham.* I think it be thine indeed, for thou liest in 't.

*First Clo.* You lie out on 't, sir, and therefore 'tis not yours : for my part, I do not lie in 't, and yet it is mine.

*Ham.* Thou dost lie in 't, to be in 't and say it is thine : 'tis for the dead, not for the quick ; therefore thou liest.

*First Clo.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir ; 'twill away again, from me to you.

*Ham.* What man dost thou dig it for?

*First Clo.* For no man, sir.

*Ham.* What woman then?

*First Clo.* For none neither.

*Ham.* Who is to be buried in 't?

*First Clo.* One that was a woman, sir ; but, rest her soul, she 's dead.

*Ham.* How absolute the knave is ! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

*First Clo.* Of all the days i' the year, I came to 't that day that our last King Hamlet o'ercame Fortinbras.

*Ham.* How long is that since?

*First Clo.* Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: it was that very day that young Hamlet was born: he that is mad, and sent into England.

*Ham.* Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

*First Clo.* Why, because a' was mad; a' shall recover his wits there; or, if a' do not, 'tis no great matter there.

*Ham.* Why?

*First Clo.* 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

*Ham.* How came he mad?

*First Clo.* Very strangely, they say.

*Ham.* How 'strangely'?

*First Clo.* Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

*Ham.* Upon what ground?

*First Clo.* Why, here in Denmark: I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

*Ham.* How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

*First Clo.* I' faith, if a' be not rotten before a' die—he will last you some eight year or nine year: Here's a skull now: this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

*Ham.* Whose was it?

*First Clo.* A whoreson mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

*Ham.* Nay, I know not.

*First Clo.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! a' poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

*Ham.* This?

*First Clo.* E'en that.

*Ham.* Let me see. [*Takes the skull.*] Alas, poor



Yorick! I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chop-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that. Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

*Hor.* What's that, my lord?

*Ham.* Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

*Hor.* E'en so.

*Ham.* And smelt so? pah! [*Puts down the skull.*]

*Hor.* E'en so, my lord.

*Ham.* To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

*Hor.* 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

*Ham.* No, faith, not a jot.

Imperious Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,  
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:  
O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,  
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!

But soft! but soft! aside: here comes the king.

*Enter Priests, etc., in procession; the Corpse of OPHELIA, LAERTES and Mourners following; KING, QUEEN, their trains, etc.*

The queen, the courtiers: who is this they follow?

And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken  
The corse they follow did with desperate hand

Fordo its own life :

Couch we awhile, and mark.

[Retiring with HORATIO.]

*Laer.* What ceremony else ?

*Ham.* That is Laertes, a very noble youth : mark.

*Laer.* What ceremony else ?

*First Priest.* Her obsequies have been as far enlarged  
As we have warrant : her death was doubtful ;  
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,  
She should in ground unsanctified have lodged  
Till the last trumpet ; for charitable prayers,  
Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her :  
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,  
Her maiden strewments and the bringing home  
Of bell and burial.

*Laer.* Must there no more be done ?

*First Priest.* No more be done :  
We should profane the service of the dead  
To sing a requiem and such rest to her  
As to peace-parted souls.

*Laer.* Lay her i' the earth :  
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh  
May violets spring ! I tell thee, churlish priest,  
A ministering angel shall my sister be,  
When thou liest howling.

*Ham.* What, the fair Ophelia !

*Queen.* [Scattering flowers] Sweets to the sweet :  
farewell !

I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife ;  
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,  
And not have strew'd thy grave.

*Laer.* O, treble woe  
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head  
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense  
Deprived thee of ! Hold off the earth a while,  
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms :

[Leaps into the grave.]

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,

Till of this flat a mountain you have made  
To o'ertop old Pelion or the skyish head  
Of blue Olympus.

*Ham.* [*Advancing*] What is he whose grief  
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow  
Conjures the wandering stars and makes them stand  
Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,  
Hamlet the Dane. [*Leaps into the grave.*

*Laer.* The devil take thy soul! [*Grappling with him.*

*Ham.* Thou pray'st not well.

I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat;  
For, though I am not splenitive and rash,  
Yet have I in me something dangerous.  
Hold off thy hand.

*King.* Pluck them asunder.

*Queen.* Hamlet, Hamlet!

*Ham.* Why, I will fight with him upon this theme  
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

*Queen.* O my son, what theme?

*Ham.* I loved Ophelia: forty thousand brothers  
Could not, with all their quantity of love,  
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

*King.* O, he is mad, Laertes.

*Ham.* 'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do:  
Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear  
thyself?

I'll do 't. Dost thou come here to whine?  
To outface me with leaping in her grave?  
Be buried quick with her, and so will I:  
And if thou prate of mountains, let them throw  
Millions of acres on us, till our ground,  
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,  
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,  
I'll rant as well as thou.

*Queen.* This is mere madness:  
And thus awhile the fit will work on him;  
Anon, as patient as the female dove  
When that her golden couplets are disclosed,

His silence will sit drooping.

*Ham.* Hear you, sir ;  
What is the reason that you use me thus ?  
I loved you ever : but it is no matter ;  
Let Hercules himself do what he may,  
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*

*King.* I pray thee, good Horatio, wait upon him.  
[*Exit* HORATIO.]

Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.

[*To Laertes*] Strengthen your patience in our last  
night's speech :

We'll put the matter to the present push.  
This grave shall have a living monument :  
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see ;  
Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE 2. *A hall in the castle.*

*Enter* HAMLET and HORATIO.

*Ham.* But I am very sorry, good Horatio,  
That to Laertes I forgot myself ;  
For, by the image of my cause, I see  
The portraiture of his :  
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me  
Into a towering passion.

*Hor.* Peace ! who comes here ?

*Enter* OSRIC.

*Os.* Your lordship is right welcome back to  
Denmark.

*Ham.* I humbly thank you, sir. Dost know this  
water-fly ?

*Hor.* No, my good lord.

*Ham.* Thy state is the more gracious, for 'tis a  
vice to know him.

*Os.* Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure,  
I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.



*Ham.* I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit.

*Osr.* Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing.

*Ham.* What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

*Osr.* Of Laertes?

*Ham.* Of him, sir.

*Osr.* You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

*Ham.* I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence.

*Osr.* I mean, sir, for his weapon.

*Ham.* What's his weapon?

*Osr.* Rapier and dagger.

*Ham.* That's two of his weapons: well.

*Osr.* The king, sir, hath laid, sir, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits: he hath laid on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

*Ham.* Sir, I will walk here in the hall: if it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me; let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him an I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

*Osr.* Shall I redeliver you e'en so?

*Ham.* To this effect, sir, after what flourish your nature will.

*Osr.* I commend my duty to your lordship.

*Ham.* Yours, yours. [Exit OSRIC.]

*Hor.* You will lose this wager, my lord.

*Ham.* I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think

how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

*Hor.* Nay, good my lord,—

*Ham.* It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman.

*Hor.* If your mind dislike any thing, obey it. I will forestal their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

*Ham.* Not a whit; we defy augury: there is special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all; since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is 't to leave betimes?

There's a divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough-hew them how we will.

Let be.

*Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, and Lords, OSRIC and other Attendants with foils and gauntlets; a table and flagons of wine on it.*

*King.* Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The KING puts LAERTES' hand into HAMLET'S.*

*Ham.* Give me your pardon, sir: I've done you wrong;

But pardon 't, as you are a gentleman.

Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil

Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,

That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,

And hurt my brother.

*Laer.*

I am satisfied in nature,

Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most

To my revenge:

I do receive your offer'd love like love,

And will not wrong it.

*Ham.*

I embrace it freely,

And will this brother's wager frankly play.

Give us the foils. Come on.

*Lacr.* Come, one for me.

*Ham.* I'll be your foil, Laertes : in mine ignorance  
Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,  
Stick fiery off indeed.

*Lacr.* You mock me, sir.

*Ham.* No, by this hand.

*King.* Give them the foils, young Osric. Cousin  
Hamlet,  
You know the wager ?

*Ham.* Very well, my lord ;  
Your grace has laid the odds o' the weaker side.

*King.* I do not fear it ; I have seen you both :  
But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds.

*Lacr.* This is too heavy ; let me see another.

*Ham.* This likes me well. These foils have all a  
length ? *[They prepare to play.]*

*King.* Set me the stoups of wine upon that table.  
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,  
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,  
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath.  
Come, begin ;  
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

*Ham.* Come on, sir.

*Lacr.* Come, my lord. *[They play.]*

*Ham.* One.

*Lacr.* No.

*Ham.* Judgement.

*Osr.* A hit, a very palpable hit.

*Lacr.* Well ; again.

*King.* Stay ; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl  
is thine ;  
Here's to thy health.

*[Trumpets sound, and cannon-shot off within.]*

Give him the cup.

*Ham.* I'll play this bout first ; set it by a while.  
Come. *[They play.]* Another hit ; what say you ?

*Lacr.* A touch, a touch, I do confess.

*King.* Our son shall win.

*Queen.* The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

*Ham.* Good, madam !

*King.* Gertrude, do not drink.

*Queen.* I have, my lord ; I pray you, pardon me.

*King.* [*Aside*] It is the poison'd cup ; it is too late.

*Laer.* [*Aside*] I'll hit him now.

And yet it is almost against my conscience.

*Ham.* Come, for the third, Laertes : you but dally ;  
I pray you, pass with your best violence ;

I am afeard you make a wanton of me.

*Laer.* Say you so ? come on. [*They play.*]

[*LAERTES wounds HAMLET ; then, in scuffling, they  
change rapiers, and HAMLET wounds LAERTES.*]

*King.* Part them ; they are incensed.

*Ham.* Nay, come, again. [*The QUEEN falls.*]

*Osr.* How is 't, Laertes ?

*Laer.* I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

*Ham.* How does the queen ?

*King.* She swoonds to see them bleed.

*Queen.* No, no—O my dear Hamlet,—  
The drink, the drink ! I am poison'd. [*Dies.*]

*Ham.* O villany ! Ho ! let the door be lock'd :  
Treachery ! seek it out. [*LAERTES falls.*]

*Laer.* It is here, Hamlet : Hamlet, thou art slain ;  
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,  
Unbated and envenom'd ; the king, the king 's to  
blame.

*Ham.* The point envenom'd too !  
Then, venom, to thy work. [*Stabs the KING.*]  
Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,  
Follow my mother. [*KING dies.*]

*Laer.* Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet :  
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,  
Nor thine on me ! [*Dies.*]

*Ham.* Heaven make thee free of it ! I follow thee.  
I am dead, Horatio.  
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,  
That are but mutes or audience to this act,



Had I but time—as this fell sergeant, death,  
Is strict in his arrest—O, I could tell you—  
But let it be. Horatio, I am dead ;  
Thou livest ; report me and my cause aright  
To the unsatisfied.

*Hor.* Never believe it :  
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane :  
Here 's yet some liquor left.

*Ham.* As thou 'rt a man,  
Give me the cup : let go ; by heaven, I 'll have 't.  
O good Horatio, what a wounded name,  
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me !  
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,  
Absent thee from felicity a while,  
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,  
To tell my story. O, I die, Horatio ;  
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit :  
The rest is silence. *[Dies.]*

FINIS.



[717.—2/09.]









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